The arrival of the young wife, tara·s, in the husband's village is celebrated again with slaughtering, a greeting to which she is entitled (cf. folk tale, LVIII). 585 [601]

Today only a few Hottentots could afford several wives, as ancient custom allows, because of their impoverishment. Also the relationship between the sexes has deteriorated to such an extent that it is not necessary for a man to have the intimate relationship with several wives officially sanctioned. 177 595

2. Intra-Family Relationships

a) In the relationship of husband and wife, the honored position of the wife differentiates the family of the Hottentots clearly from that of the Hereros. The woman is considered the mistress of the hut in all household matters. Thus under certain circumstances she has the right to refuse her husband the right to enter the hut. She manages the food supply. Her husband asks for milk and she gives it to him. In addition, the fact that she does the most important job in the household of a herdsman, namely the milking, differentiates her from the wife of a Herero. The honored position of the woman in the marriage relationship does not prevent occasional quarrels in which the husband makes full use of his physical superiority. 593 171 562 462

Only barrenness lowers the esteem of a wife permanently.

b) The relationship of the parents, //gũ·ǂra, to the children, /gõ·an. Caring for small children, aba·, is naturally the mother's business. She carries her child on her back in a lamb skin called //hani·b (see Plate X). 854 [601]

"//Haniba !kxara !", i.e. Drag the aba skin after you!" is shouted to little children when they sneeze (sĩǀ). In other cases I heard the mother wish the sneezing child "!oǂman kxao !," i.e. "push your rear !" (ᵉ-an seems to be a reflexive particle). Both wishes refer to the eagerly-awaited first attempts of the child to walk. The baby tries to get up from its helpless sitting position on the floor and at first always falls back again on its rear. When it can walk, it drags the aba skin, which it has by then outgrown, after itself and uses it as a toy. 854 866

[300] The parents assign each child, even grown ones, a certain cow for its use (ᵉmaĩam, i.e., placing to the mouth). The child may only milk for itself this one cow, ãǂbes, mornings and evenings. During the day, when the cattle are in the pasture, he is served what is left of his milk. Likewise those who are married sometimes get four or five cows from their parents. 855 422 [585

B. The Tribal Community

The scattering of the population over wide areas and their unstable manner of living, both a result of the climatic conditions of the country, has not permitted the social and civil life of the Hottentots to establish rigid norms. In addition, the confusions of the last years have swept away the ancient customs that had persisted until recently, so that a unified presentation of the social life of the Hottentots in their state and community is impossible today. The traveler [318] can only note those basic beliefs that he finds in his dealings with the natives which are still alive among the people even though they may not be publicly expressed. The little that I can report here concerns the Hottentots' views about property, sexual relations, and power.

1. Property

The only instances of private ownership of land probably occur only in the nara-fields of the Kuiseb region behind Walvis Bay. The hut is movable property and the so-called "gardens" were originally foreign to the Hottentot and do not count here. The usable stretches of land, the pasture areas, are common property of the families who have their cattle there. The right to this pasture area exists only as long as no stronger community contests it. Battles for pastures and cattle have been fought by the Hottentots among themselves from time immemorial. The lack of organization beyond the narrow tribal bounds has contributed greatly to the splintering of national power.

Within the tribe (another ethic exists in regard to the white man) private ownership of movable property, especially cattle, is sufficiently protected. Theft is considered a serious wrong and is very severely punished (see Power).

Repayment of a debt (again only among themselves) is considered a matter of honor but is often taken lightly enough: "Iaũs ga ǂareza ota nĩ ra ma tsi," i.e. When the rock-rabbit gets a tail (i.e. never), I will give it back to you."

In spite of the Hottentot's strictness in preserving his own private property rights, he is not at all miserly. He not only divides the last thing he has with his own people, he is (and was particularly so as all the older accounts testify) particularly hospitable to passing strangers. It would be superfluous to prove again that this hospitality was not based on a shrewd expectation of gaining some advantage, but on a deeply rooted feeling of brotherhood.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
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only temporary, and nowadays the period of its duration is often shortened to only a few weeks or even days. On the return of the man to his own people, his mother is required to slaughter an animal as a sign of welcome to his wife, who then reciprocates the gesture in the same way. Neglect on the part of the mother-in-law to provide this welcome is regarded as implying unfriendliness towards the young wife.[1]

The status of the wife in Hottentot society is far from being that of an inferior. Although as a rule she plays a subordinate rôle in matters pertaining to tribal life, and in public always walks several paces behind her husband, yet her position in the household is supreme, and the education of the children is wholly in her hands. She is regarded as the mistress of the hut, which she brings with her at marriage, and of all its contents. She even has the right in certain circumstances to forbid her husband to enter it. She has her own property in cattle, some given to her by her parents while she was still a child, others when she was married, and her husband will not venture to sell or slaughter an animal belonging to her without her consent or in her absence. Even if he intends to barter his own stock he usually first consults her, and during his absence she also controls the pasturing of the herds. She supervises or herself does the milking which provides the household with most of its food, and controls all the provisions, allotting to each his food according to status and age, and brooking no contradiction. Her husband may not even take a mouthful of milk without first obtaining her permission, and should he do so, says Hahn, his nearest female relatives will put a fine on him, consisting in cows and sheep, which are to be added to the stock of his wife.[2]

All the Hottentot tribes formerly permitted polygamy. It seems, however, to have been practised to only a slight extent, and as a rule only the more powerful and wealthy men appear to have had more than one wife. In any case the number of wives seldom exceeded two or three. Each wife had her own hut, in which she lived with her children, and had also her own property. The first wife married, however, was the chief wife, and took unlimited precedence. Her

[1] Hahn, *Tsuni-||Goam*, 18; Wuttke, "Die Khoi-Khoin oder Nama," 318; Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten," 343–4; von François, *Nama und Damara*, 214; Schultze, *Namaland und Kalahari*, 297, 518; Hoernlé, *Richtersveld*, 16.

[2] Kolb, op. cit., 46; Hahn, op. cit., 19; Schultze, op. cit., 299; Schinz, op. cit. 82; Wandres, "Ueber das Rechtsbewusstsein . . . der Hottentotten," 279; Olpp, *Angra Pequena*, 25–6; *Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany* (Cmd. 9146), 75.

5: Vedder M-5 (ca. 1910) 1928
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681 cuts with a stick until ultimately, in the olden days, the death
[685] sentence was decided upon. At the present time, the matter is then referred to the law-courts. In the case of corporal punishment the sentence was usually based on the principle of: Eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth—unless the parties
[682 agreed upon another form of indemnity. Murder, high
687 treason, attempted murder of the chief and incest were always
684] punished with death according to the deposition of the old people. For the execution of corporal punishment a bailiff was appointed and fines were collected by the magistrate.

673 6. Generally they regard disrespectful behaviour towards the old, murder, homicide, bodily injury, theft, illegitimate impregnation and treason as punishable offences.

Lies and perjury are also deemed improper, but are not
[835] subject to legal punishment. In the same way adultery is not punishable. Incest becomes a case for the law only when the father refuses to be responsible for the sustenance of the child during its first years, namely, the time when it needs
[388] the nursing of the mother. As soon as the child is five years of age, the father takes it and the payments, which as a rule were in cattle and to-day are in money, cease.

It cannot, however, be said that these forms are valid everywhere where there are still unbroken Nama tribes ruled by a chief; and although they still know their old laws, they do not avail themselves of them in every case.

421 7. The proprietary rights of the old Nama were not extensive, and those of the present generation are still more limited as a result of the fact that they hardly possess any lands. Generally speaking we may say that the individual possesses nothing but is the usufructuary of what the family possesses. This even includes clothes and things for daily use.

422 Under personal property one understands the possession of cattle. A child even may receive one or more goats from his father and he uses their milk. He has the right to milk such goats without permission and their progeny are his property. Where natural conditions make it possible every person—man, wife, child—posseas a few goats, sheep or even cattle. When these are to be sold it becomes manifest that this personal property continues to be regarded as family property, because in such cases, the whole family and not the individual decides whether there should be a sale or not.

423 The land or their tribal territory can under no circumstances become the property of an individual, neither is it the property of the chief. He has not got the right to dispose of or to give away anything of the territory which, in all respects, is regarded as common tribal property, unless the money received be divided amongst the families of the tribe, after they have consented to such a sale. The boundaries of a tribal territory, however, are not fixed. All lands and grounds where members of a tribe have previously grazed